

RENEWAL, RECREATION & HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE

16 November 2021

QUESTIONS & REPLIES

(A) QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY

1. From Tara Swift to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

What percentage number of households on the Housing Waiting List will be able to afford renting in the luxury apartments Areli propose to build in Orpington?

Reply:

It is early in the process and Areli are yet to submit a planning application for the proposed scheme and so at this point it is not known what percentage of the scheme they are proposing to be affordable housing. I can confirm that there will be affordable housing – some shared ownership and some social-rented at the lowest possible rents.

2. From Tara Swift to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

The loss of the leisure centre for at least 2 years is unacceptable. The proposed leisure centre will clearly be smaller in size than the current one. With an estimated 2,000 new residents in the centre of Orpington, will the centre have the capacity for this increase in membership?

Reply:

The Council fully recognise that any temporary loss of leisure facilities will be challenging, but whether the centre was to be refurbished or fully redeveloped there will be an extensive period of closure necessary, this is unavoidable. However, what is being discussed is how any new facilities can be prioritised so that any period of closure is minimised. Whilst no decision has been made on the size of any potential new facilities, it is recognised that any new pools built will be built to meet Sports England Guidance which specifies a 25m pool. The size of the rest of the leisure centre will not be very different, but the use of space will be more efficient, with less dead space.

Supplementary Question:

Will the new leisure centre accommodate more users?

Reply:

The Mayor of London's target is for 774 new homes in the borough every year for fifteen years. Demand for leisure and all other services will increase, and this is a difficulty that we will face whatever we do on this site.

3. From Mrs Paula Peters to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

Areli have said it's down to Bromley Council to put additional infrastructure in place for the additional 2,000 families for the development. As current GP provision and school placements in the area are at breaking point, what will Bromley Council do to address this with the NHS and Education Department?

Reply:

I refer to my previous answer – the increase in population will happen. The Bromley Local Plan and the London Plan have robust policies which will ensure that appropriate social infrastructure provision (such as health and education facilities) is in place to service the needs of existing residents and future occupiers of new development. A future planning application at the Walnuts will need to submit detailed information to demonstrate how the proposal addresses these key social infrastructure policies.

4. From Mrs Paula Peters to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

How is Bromley Council going to deal with the high volume of traffic and noise pollution that the development will bring to Orpington and have you taken into account the possibility of the extension of the ULEZ scheme to Bromley?

Reply:

This will be a problem whatever happens on this site, and we will have to face these difficulties.

5. From John Pead to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

Why does the proposed height of the two towers exceed the height of the Orpington College building?

Reply:

The proposal comes from Areli – it is not our plan. The Council's planning committee will need to consider the proposals in the light of our planning policies. Areli need a certain number of units to make the development viable – hence the proposed height.

This is not a question I can comment on but is a question for the developer and will ultimately be determined in line with planning policy by the planning committee.

Supplementary Question:

Policies 47 and 48 of Bromley's Local Plan cover refer to the skyline of Orpington and must be adhered to. Will the Council adhere to these policies?

Reply:

The planning committee will need to consider this, and will take these policies into account, but this is not what the PDS Committee is considering now.

(B) QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN REPLY

1. From Debbie Griffiths to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

We will be without essential services such as the Leisure Centre and Saxon Day Centre, will the rebuilding of these facilities to the same size or larger be included in the first phase?

Reply:

Any new public services and facilities proposed as part of the scheme will be required to be fit for purpose for now and future demand.

The Council fully recognises that any temporary loss of leisure facilities will be challenging, but whether the Centre was to be refurbished or fully redeveloped there will be an extensive period of closure necessary, this is unavoidable. However, what is being discussed is how any new facilities can be prioritised so that any period of closure is minimised.

As the Saxon Day Service is a specialised service with little scope for service users to use other facilities, provision will be made for this service to be rebuilt before any current facilities are closed - this will ensure full-service continuity. The scale of the leisure centre development does unfortunately not allow this, but we are privileged to have a number of leisure centres providing similar facilities across the Borough compared to other Boroughs who have only have one or two such facilities.

2. From Debbie Griffiths to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

What happens if the property market crashes, do we get left with a building site and potentially no Leisure Centre or Saxon Day Centre?

Reply:

If the proposal from the development were to be granted planning permission the Council would ensure that any Development Agreement ensures that there are satisfactory legal protection and warranties to ensure that the public assets are protected, and this would be standard practice.